

Island Energy Plan Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2010
Town Hall, Old Town Road
12:00 noon

Present: Chair Peter Baute, Ken Lacoste, Kevin Hoyt, Neil Lang and Sam Bird.
Committee members Barbara MacMullan, John Warfel, Russell Littlefield and Scott Comings were absent. Also present were Town Planner Jane Weidman and for the recording of minutes, Deputy Town Clerk Millie McGinnes.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Lacoste at 12:08 p.m.

Approval of April 14, 2010 Minutes

Mr. Lacoste made a motion to approve the minutes of April 14, 2010. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lang and carried.

5 Ayes (Baute, Lacoste, Lang, Bird, Hoyt) 0 Nays
4 Absent (MacMullan, Comings, Littlefield Warfel)

Summation of reports received so far from members (Ms Weidman)

Town Planner Jane Weidman distributed the draft Energy Component of the Comprehensive Plan she developed and reviewed the Background portion section by section. The following highlights/additions/subtractions were mentioned:

- Fuel Use on Block Island –
 - Diesel Fuel for Electric Power Generation: Move the information included in this section to the Block Island Power Company section.
 - Transportation Fuel Use: Make a general statement about transportation costs or include this item under the Goals and Objectives section.
 - Solid Waste Processing Fuel Use: Expand the section, perhaps as a stand alone section, and include all fuel usages associated with waste (on-site, transportation, etc.). Mr. Bird discussed a gasification machine developed by 1st Energy which turns garbage into fuel pellets. He will pursue further information. Perhaps Implementing Actions can include gasification, residential recycling, construction waste recycling, composting, etc.
 - Either eliminate what is left of the entire section or move it to Implementing Actions.
- Water Use on Block Island –
 - Dr. Baute will collect figures concerning water usage and associated energy uses and costs.
 - Mr. Hoyt will collect figures concerning sewage volume and associated energy uses and costs.
- Renewable Energy Use on Block Island –
 - Wind Power:
 - Ms. Weidman will collect figures regarding residential WECS.

- Goals and Objectives should include amending the WECS ordinance to enable the production of residential wind energy.
- Solar Power: Dr. Baute will collect figures regarding residential solar arrays.
- Other: This may include a statement about wood energy not being feasible beyond aesthetics. A recommendation as to lowest emission, highest efficiency wood burning units should be included.
- Mr. Bird mentioned a “right to dry” ordinance, which would prohibit homeowner associations from forbidding clotheslines on properties.

The rest of the Background section will be reviewed next month. Ms. Weidman will make revisions for that meeting.

Additional reports: Lacoste, Bird

Mr. Lacoste noted that he would not be able to address his report, as his current work load is too heavy.

Mr. Bird noted that he is working on his report regarding HERS and expected to have information at the next meeting.

Developing the energy component of the Comp Plan (Ms. Weidman)

This item was discussed under the earlier item regarding summation of reports.

Potential recommendations for Town Council:

Pursuit of net metering

Incentives for homeowner installation of solar thermal and voltaic units

Consideration of other alternative energy sources

This item was not addressed.

**Revisit issue of a baseline estimate of energy utilization on BI by source
(for instance, BIPCO’s diesel fuel usage is about 1,000,000 gallons per year)**

Discussion ensued regarding collecting information for use as a baseline of energy consumption on Block Island. Ms. Weidman suggested using existing general numbers for a typical New England home. Clerk McGinnes noted that a Freedom of Information request could be made to RI Division of Taxation regarding the tax collected from home heating oil sales made on Block Island.

Mr. Bird noted that he had spoken with IT specialist Michelle Spero about creating a website component to allow a household to input energy data to determine their energy footprint. He explained that he did not think a lot of useful data would be collected through such a program, as the typical user would be the energy conscious, who already is making energy conservation a priority.

Discussion continued regarding energy usage associated with transportation. It was decided that the Town Council would ask Interstate Navigation, at their annual joint meeting in the fall, if they would be willing to provide fuel consumption information.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Lacoste made a motion to adjourn at 1:30 p.m.
The motion was seconded by Ms. MacMullan and carried unanimously.

Millie McGinnes
Deputy Town Clerk

Approved: June 9, 2010